

THE ESSENTIAL PIECES OF A PARISH DISCERNMENT SESSION

SYNOD 2021-2023



INTRODUCTION

- » Prayer
- » Introduction Video by Archbishop Aquila
- » Short Overview of what to expect

THE QUESTIONS

There are 3 questions we will be asking God to speak into. For each question there will be:

- » Introductory Video
- » Listening to the Holy Spirit
- » Table Sharing

CONCLUSION

- » Thank you to those who participated
- » Instructions on how to submit further feedback
- » Closing Prayer



Possible “Ground Rules” for Table Sharing

Respect one another

- » Understanding that we are sharing within a finite time period, we all agree to be concise with our comments to make sure everyone has chance to share, and to avoid dominating the conversation.
- » We give our facilitator permission to lovingly interrupt us if we are running short on time and another person has not had a chance to share.
- » We will listen attentively to one another and avoid side conversations or using our phones during our discussion.

Keep on topic

- » Our Archdiocese has embarked on a process of prayer and sharing around 3 essential questions pertaining to our mission. We agree to pursue conversations and share the fruit of our reflection within the scope that’s been outlined.
- » During these gatherings we will not be hosting conversations on changing Church doctrine or teaching. These sessions are not about debating or inviting critique of Church doctrine and teaching.

Keep the focus on the Lord

- » Understanding that we are all listening to the Holy Spirit during these discernment sessions, we will do our best to keep our conversations and reflections rooted in what we feel we heard in prayer.



SAMPLE DISCERNMENT GATHERING OUTLINES

Sample 1

In this scenario, the parish will be hosting a large group discernment session on a Saturday from 9:00am-2:00pm. There will be roughly 10 tables with 6-8 participants at each table. They will have a facilitator leading the gathering with a microphone up front. They will also have a table leader and scribe at each table.

9:00am	Welcome, opening prayer and introduction video from Archbishop Aquila
9:15am	Facilitator gives a short explanation of how the morning will proceed
9:20am	Introduction Video to Question 1: Mission of the Church
9:25am	Transition to the Church or other location suitable for prayer (Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament if possible)
9:30am	Prayer Time with Question 1
9:45am	Transition back to tables
9:50am	Sharing what each person received in prayer (at tables, facilitated by table leader and recorded by table scribe). <i>Prior to this first sharing, invite each person at the table to <u>briefly</u> introduce themselves to the group.</i>
10:20am	Large-Group Synopsis (table leaders take turns briefly reporting what their group discussed)
10:30am	Break
10:40am	Introduction Video to Question 2: Mission of the Parish
10:45am	Transition to the Church or other location suitable for prayer (Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament if possible)
10:50am	Prayer Time with Question 2
11:05am	Transition back to tables
11:10am	Sharing what each person received in prayer (at tables, facilitated by table leader and recorded by table scribe)
11:40am	Large-Group Synopsis (table leaders take turns briefly reporting what their group discussed)



12:00pm	Lunch Break
12:30pm	Introduction Video to Question 3: Mission of the Disciple
12:35pm	Transition to the Church or other location suitable for prayer (Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament if possible)
12:40pm	Prayer Time with Question 1
12:55pm	Transition back to tables
1:00pm	Sharing what each person received in prayer (at tables, facilitated by table leader and recorded by table scribe)
1:30pm	Large-Group Synopsis (table leaders take turns briefly reporting what their group discussed)
1:40pm	Discussion of personal takeaways from the experience (in small groups at tables)
1:55pm	Concluding remarks (thank you for participating, instructions on how to submit additional feedback, and concluding prayer)



Sample 2

In this scenario, the parish will be hosting a large group discernment session on a week night from 6:00pm-8:30pm. There will be roughly 10 tables with 6-8 participants at each table. They will have a facilitator leading the gathering with a microphone up front. They will also have a table leader and scribe at each table.

5:30pm	<i>Optional dinner</i>
6:00pm	Welcome, opening prayer and introduction video from Archbishop Aquila
6:15pm	Facilitator gives a short explanation of how the evening will proceed <i>*In this scenario, the parish will only have 1 prayer time and 1 time for table sharing, so they will be asking some tables to pray about Question 1, other tables to pray about Question 2, and the remaining tables to pray about Question 3.</i>
6:20pm	Introduction Videos for all 3 Questions
6:40pm	Transition to the Church or other location suitable for prayer (Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament if possible)
6:45pm	Prayer Time with the Questions
7:00pm	Transition back to tables
7:05pm	Sharing what each person received in prayer (at tables, facilitated by table leader and recorded by table scribe). <i>Prior to this first sharing, invite each person at the table to <u>briefly</u> introduce themselves to the group.</i>
7:35pm	Large-Group Synopsis Beginning with Question 1, the facilitator will invite the table leaders who's tables prayed with Question 1 to share the results of their prayer/discussion. The facilitator will then move on to the table leaders who discussed Question 2, and then Question 3. This will allow everyone to hear the fruit of the conversations that were had surrounding the additional 2 Questions they did not discuss.
8:00pm	Discussion of personal takeaways from the experience (in small groups at tables)
8:15pm	Concluding remarks (thank you for participating, instructions on how to submit additional feedback, and concluding prayer)



Sample 3

In this scenario, the parish will be hosting three large group discernment sessions on 3 consecutive Wednesday evenings from 6:00pm-7:30pm. Each of the large group discernment sessions will only cover one of the “Questions” from the synodal process. The first session will cover Question 1, the second will pray with Question 2, etc. There will be roughly 10 tables with 6-8 participants at each table. They will have a facilitator leading the gathering with a microphone up front. They will also have a table leader and scribe at each table.

Session 1 – Question One: Mission of the Church

5:30pm	<i>Optional dinner</i>
6:00pm	Welcome, opening prayer and introduction video from Archbishop Aquila
6:15pm	Facilitator gives a short explanation of how the evening will proceed
6:20pm	Introduction Video for Question 1: Mission of the Church
6:25pm	Transition to the Church or other location suitable for prayer (Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament if possible)
6:30pm	Prayer Time with the Questions
6:45pm	Transition back to tables
6:50pm	Sharing what each person received in prayer (at tables, facilitated by table leader and recorded by scribe). Prior to this first sharing, invite each person at the table to briefly introduce themselves to the group.
7:20 pm	Large-Group Synopsis (table leaders take turns briefly reporting what their group discussed)
7:30pm	Concluding remarks (thank you for participating, instructions on how to submit additional feedback, and concluding prayer)



Sessions 2 - Question 2 (simply replicate for Session 3 - Question 3)

5:30pm	<i>Optional dinner</i>
6:00pm	Opening prayer
6:05pm	Facilitator gives a short explanation of how the evening will proceed
6:10pm	Introduction Video for Question 2: Mission of the Parish
6:15pm	Transition to the Church or other location suitable for prayer (Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament if possible)
6:20pm	Prayer Time with the Questions
6:35pm	Transition back to tables
6:40pm	Sharing what each person received in prayer (at tables, facilitated by table leader and recorded by scribe)
7:10 pm	Large-Group Synopsis (table leaders take turns briefly reporting what their group discussed)
7:25pm	Concluding remarks (thank you for participating, instructions on how to submit additional feedback, and concluding prayer)



Sample 4

In this scenario, the parish will be hosting multiple discernment sessions and each session will cover all 3 questions. Instead of having multiple small groups at multiple tables, this scenario will seek to host a group of between 10-20 people in a large group sharing environment. There will be a facilitator to lead the sharing and 1 scribe to capture all the information from the sharing.

- » *In this example, it's happening in the evening, but the parish will host sessions at different times/days of the week; as many as they believe they need to accommodate their people.*

6:00pm	Welcome, opening prayer and introduction video from Archbishop Aquila
6:15pm	Facilitator gives a short explanation of how the evening will proceed
6:20pm	Introduction Videos for all three Questions.
6:35pm	Transition to the Church or other location suitable for prayer (Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament if possible)
6:40pm	Prayer Time with all three Questions
7:00pm	Transition time
7:05pm	Large Group sharing facilitated by the "Facilitator"
7:45pm	Concluding remarks (thank you for participating, instructions on how to submit additional feedback, and concluding prayer)

